

[Patent Leather Shoes]

1

Name: Jane K. Leary

Subject: The Shoeworker of Lynn 1938-9 Mass. [11/2?] 17 2/13/39

Patent Leather Shoes

"Taday, it 'aint sa hard fur manufacturers ta make patent leather shoes as it wuz in my time. Fur then the leather 'ould crack sa easy. Jest a little cold weather 'ould crack 'em if ya' din't watch out. Copy - 1

Why when a manufacturer 'ould have racks a 'em in the shop, he'd shure see ta it that the shop 'ould be warm, night as well as day. Fur if he din't more'n likely he'd come into the shop some mornin' and see hull racks a 'em all cracked. Ya cun't sell them and they'd be all loss."

[#####?]

2

Back Yard Pumps

"Jest as things have / changed a lot in shoe shops since I first went ta work there, so other things have changed a lot. I remember when most a the tenements din't have runnin' water in ' em. There wuz a pump or a well in the back yards. Some folks din't even have their own pumps but had ta come to a neighbors ta get water.

"I remember one time how folks usta come ta our back yard, when I wuz a boy, ta get their water. They'd even get ta think they owned the pump, they used it sa long, ' cause if it

Library of Congress

'ould get outa order, they'd come ta my mother an ' say, 'Why don't ya get your pump fixed so it'll work right?' Ireland ?

"In the winter time that pump 'ould get frozen every time we'd have a cold snap. We'd have / ta pour cold water down it, or maybe put salt down it, so as we could get some water.

"Everybody had a water bucket beside the sink in them days abd and a tin cup somewheres handy." [#####?] 3 Recreation

"A thing that a lotta folks thought wuz fun years ago wuz ta go on a picnic in summer. A gang from a shop or maybe a couple a shops ['?] ould take a picnic lunch an' go ta some grove fur the day. There'd be a lotta good eats, an' generally some beer or maybe somethin' stronger. An there wuz games, Quoits, etc., an' card games an' fun all day. A lotta the picnics wuz over ta Nahant. That place wuzn't built up like it is today so we had a lotta room. insert from 18 p. 3 insert from 17 p. 5. " Other times a fella'd hire a rig fur a day and take a girl ta some picnic that might be a few miles away. I remember once I hired one and the horse got loose from the hitchin' post and turned aroun' and come back ta the stable in Lynn by itself. Me and the girl had ta get a ride home with some other people we knowed wuz comin' ta Lynn. " When ya took your girl out that way, she usually brought the lunch. The rig 'ould cost ya considerable fur the day an' it wuz her part ta provide the eats. "

"The people that had a lotta money owned their own rigs. A place up in Salisbury made some a the best in the country. If ya had a rubber tired coach from that place, it wuz like havin' a Packard today. An' they cost somethin' too.

"I remember when they advertized them 'em as bein' built on springs that wun't jar ya. An' we thought they din't too, when we rode in 'em. Today the oldest kinda cheap car

Library of Congress

runs smoother and with less bumpin' than them carriages that everybody thought wuz sa smooth runnin'. Jest a matter a comparison.

4

“ In the winter time a gang ‘ould get up one a them sleighin' [parties?] but I never saw much fun in 'em. They'd crowd in together on the straw so as ya'd be cramped up when ya got out. An' it wuz cold too. If there wuz no snow, they'd have what they called a straw ride, usin' a big wagon with straw on the bottom ta sit on. Customs & morals “ The smart thing fur a young fella ta do wuz ta take a girl ta Boston fur a show, but ya had ta watch out so as ta make the last train back ta Lynn. They din't run sa late as they do today. “ If ya missed that train the girl ‘ould sure be in a pickle ‘cause her reputation would sure and no foolin' be ruined if she din't get back that night. So we always had ta have enought enough money in our pocket ta hire a herdig [herrig?] ([that ?] a small cab set on a two wheeled) [?] foundation which would bob to and fro as it went) to bring her home in if we missed the train. [#####?]

5

“ Another thing we always looked forward to too wuz the Lowell picnics. The workers from the mills ‘ould come down every year and a lotta folks from Lynn ‘ould go. They wuz always on the beach. insert on p.- 3

“An' wun't them girls get their skin burned? They wan't ust ta the sun, an' there ‘aint no shade down there. Some a the girls ‘ould gets a week off, come down from Lowell, time a the picnic, and then stay on. They'd hire a room down by the beach and maybe sleep five or six in a room, some a 'em on a mattress on the floor. They din't care, ya see, fur they spent the hull day on the beach. Jest had the room ta stay in nights. But wun't they be burned like a lobster ‘fore the week wuz over and they'd go back to Lowell ? [?]

“I knowed lots a girls an' fella's that first met at them Lowell picnics and then got goin' together regular and afterwards got married. A girl a settin' there on the beach a watchin' a fella play ball, thought he wuz a pretty fine lookin' guy, but she din't think that maybe in a

Library of Congress

few years she'd be his wife and would be keepin' his house and washin' and scrubbin' fur him. An' livin' in Lynn and raisin' a family."

6

used [in part in Sec?]

Food and Entertainment

"When I wuz a young man, People people bought food diffrunt than they do today. Everybody bad had a barrel a flour in the house. Folk 'ould wonder what wuz the matter with ya if ya ever bought a ten pound bag a flour like ya do today.

"An' your potata bin 'ould be full a potatoes in the cellar too.

"I remember when my mother 'ould make enough bread to fill up that hull table." He pointed to the fair-sized kitchen table. "An' it would get eat up too.

"Fur on Sundays there'd usually be a crowd come ta dinner. Din't think nothin' a feedin' six, seven or even more'n that extra. If ya wanted ta bring some one home ta Sunday dinner, ya jest brought 'em. There wuz no need ta tall Mother ahead a time. She jest put an extra plate on.

"We always cooked an extra large piece a meat fur Sundays. 'Cause ya sorta expected company ta come. No lne one hardly ever et in restaurants in them days.

"An' if there wuz a wake, ya'd have ta get a big supply a food ready. Any one that 'ould come from outa town, 'ould havta stay over night fur the funeral. And ya'd always give them as come from nearby cake an' sandwiches an' coffee, and maybe something stronger ta drink. Wuz always plenty ta eat in a house where there wuz a wake fur a lotta peopled come. It wuz thought terrible not ta go to a wake." [#####?]